

via Denmark in the early 1980's. The understanding of the concept in Sweden is highly influenced by the German view of historical consciousness as an individual concept that deals with how human beings perceive themselves, the world around them and the history therein.¹²⁶ Since the mid 1990's historical consciousness has become one of the most central notions in Swedish history didactics and history education.¹²⁷

German historian Karl-Ernst Jeismann is generally perceived to have been the first person to offer a definition of historical consciousness.¹²⁸ According to Jeismann a historical consciousness should be understood as the ever-present awareness that all human beings and all forms of social integration they have created exist in time, meaning that they have a history and a future and are dynamic.¹²⁹ I interpret this definition of the concept to rest heavily on Hans-Georg Gadamer's view of historical consciousness as an awareness of the historicity (understood as *being in time*) and contextual contingency of human reality. Jeismann also specifies the constituents of a historical consciousness. His view is that besides historical facts, a historical consciousness should also incorporate the connection between the interpretation of the past, understanding of the present and perspective on the future.¹³⁰ In my view, this also resembles Gadamer's view of the hermeneutical circle. We interpret the past in order to understand the present and guide future action. According to Jeismann a historical consciousness is manifested in representations and conceptions of the world (since they are all an effect of the historicity specified in the definition). Finally, Jeismann then applies a historical consciousness to an understanding of how contextual contingency affects our representations of history and how this is perceived to safeguard a kind of common ground for rationality.¹³¹ Thus, historical consciousness is defined as an awareness of historicity that is constituted by interpretation of the past, understanding of the present and perspective on the future. A historical consciousness is manifested in human representations and conceptions, and results in an understanding or appreciation of how contextual contingency is the nature of *all* human representations and conceptions and thus safeguards common human rationality.

¹²⁶ Karlsson, 'Historiedidaktik: Begrepp, teori och analys', 27–34.

¹²⁷ See Bengt Schüllerqvist, *Svensk historiedidaktisk forskning*, Vetenskapsrådets rapportserie, 1651-7350; 2005:9 (Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet, 2005), 136–40.

¹²⁸ See Halvdan Eikeland, 'Begrepet Historiebevissthet, historiedidaktisk forskning og dannelselse av historie-

bevissthet', in *Historiedidaktik i Norden 6: Historiemedvetandet - teori og praksis*, ed. Sirkka Ahonen et al. (København: Institut for historie og samfundsfag, Danmarks Lærerhøjskole, 1997), 77–79; Karlsson, 'Historiedidaktik: Begrepp, teori och analys', 25.

¹²⁹ Karl-Ernst Jeismann, 'Geschichtsbewußtsein', in *Handbuch Der Geschichtsdidaktik*, ed. Klaus Bergmann et al., 1st ed. (Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1979), 42.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., 44.

Summary

This section has sought to specify the theoretical assumptions that underlie the studies in this thesis. Hermeneutics is used as the over-arching theoretical perspective, arguing that perception, interpretation and representation are crucial both in scientific research, generally, and in history, particularly. Arguing that contextual contingency is what characterises interpretation and representation in history, the history didactical concepts of historical culture, uses of history and historical consciousness are then introduced as the theoretical tools that have been applied to specify research problems, design the research project and analyse the empirical data that has been collected. Since the notions of historical culture and historical consciousness are abstract in character, the notion and concept of uses of history has become the central one in the empirical part of this study.

The theoretical position outlined here stresses the relevance of context in how we come to understand the world, ourselves and history. The importance of an awareness of, and engagement with, how our preconceptions affect how we come to understand and derive meaning of the world is specified by the hermeneutic position taken here. This awareness is held to be centrally important as related to history. It is argued that a key characteristic of history is that it consists of interpretive reconstructions of the past. This means that historians need to engage with both the context of the historical source at hand, and also the context of their own research and meaning-making. Thus, history is contextually contingent and dynamic. The history didactical concepts of historical culture, historical consciousness and uses of history, are then introduced and applied as notions we may use to understand and analyse how history is disseminated and understood both on an individual and a societal level.

Methodology

This section specifies the research methods applied in this research project and relates them to the project's aim and research questions. The section begins by outlining the chosen research design for the project. This is followed by a presentation of the theoretical approach taken, the data collection procedure and the coding of the empirical data. The final sub-section presents ethical considerations.

Research Design and Material

To enable a broad and comprehensive study of how historical culture is both constituted in historical media and history teachers' narratives and implemented teaching, a variation of approaches has been applied. One goal was to define, specify and operationalise a history didactic theoretical framework that would enable analyses of how historical culture is constituted by both historical media and history teachers. Another goal was to uncover aspects of how history is portrayed in historical media from the perspective of historical culture. A further goal was to understand how history teachers interpreted, narrated and disseminated history as agents of and within historical cultures. In order to study both historical culture in an educational context and how teachers related to this, I chose to focus on a historical era that the teachers interviewed would have some kind of experience of, to unveil the complexities of personal experiences and how these may relate to how teachers narrate and teach history. One such era is the Cold War era of 1945-1989. I have interpreted the Cold War loosely as all events that took place during these years. So, for something to be classified as belonging to the Cold War era it does not have to relate to the struggle between the USSR and the USA specifically, but can also relate to both international and domestic history as well as social and political history. The teachers included in this study were born no later than 1970 and were all trained and experienced lower secondary school history teachers. To study how historical culture is constituted in historical media, I chose to include accounts of history from history textbooks and popular history magazines, two historical media that are particularly relevant in an educational context.¹³²

A Deductive Approach

The analytical theoretical approach applied can be most accurately labelled as deductive since I have used a specific theoretical perspective to derive assumptions and hypotheses, and to generate theories that I have used to

¹³² Concerning popular history magazines from a history didactical perspective, see Popp, 'Popular History Magazines between Transmission of Knowledge and Entertainment - Some Theoretical Remarks', 42.

choose, analyse and categorise the empirical data in this study.¹³³ Furthermore, the theories developed have been modified throughout the articles and adapted according to both the aims and research questions of the individual studies, and also according to the empirical data at hand.¹³⁴ Hence, the theoretical approaches in the four articles included here differ although they share the same basic theoretical assumptions. More specific descriptions of how I have coded the empirical material using this framework can be found in the individual articles included in this thesis.

Historical culture and perceptions thereof is the main focus of this study, and, as has been described above, the notion of historical culture should be perceived as dealing with the relations to history that may exist in a certain society or environment.¹³⁵ Accordingly, historical culture should be understood as a collective notion that offers the individual a variety of approaches to history. This thesis is particularly interested in two aspects of historical culture: how is historical culture constituted in history textbooks and popular history magazines, and how do teachers relate to history as portrayed in history textbooks and narrated by themselves? However, since historical culture (as with any notion of culture) is an abstract notion, there is a need to specify how it can be studied empirically, and why that is perceived to be the case. To do that, the concepts applied here are uses of history and historical consciousness. This requires an argument for, and explanation of, the relation between these three concepts. The most fundamental assumption concerning the relationship between the concepts is that a historical culture should be perceived as a kind of discourse on history that precedes individuals in any social environment. This historical culture discourse is seen as a pre-requisite for us to even approach history since without it there would be no history to speak of or to experience. Furthermore, it specifies what is meaningful in history and what is to be perceived as good history, and vice versa. In my understanding, an important aspect of historical culture is that it is man-made and thus contingent; without upholders and supporters a historical culture will disappear. According to the theoretical model presented here, we enact and constitute a historical culture through our uses of history. Whenever we engage with history we activate certain parts of a historical culture, or in other words we engage with a certain historical discourse and through this engagement we represent (or re-represent) and reify this particular discourse on history.

Thus, uses of history are manifested in accounts or representations of history (e.g. texts, films, presentations, et cetera). However, it is important

¹³³ See Earl Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research* (Cengage Learning, 2010), 52.

¹³⁴ See Roel Snieder and Ken Lerner, *The Art of Being a Scientist: A Guide for Graduate Students and Their Mentors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 16.

¹³⁵ See Karlsson, 'Historiedidaktik: Begrepp, teori och analys', 34.

for the argument of this thesis to analyse *how* history teachers approach history and historical culture, i.e. we need to specify how a certain use of history relates to a certain cognitive disposition or perceived need or interest within an individual. These matters are discussed further in the section below presenting the results.

Data Collection

History Textbooks and Popular History Magazines

To be able to analyse historical media from the perspective of historical culture, various approaches were used. The term *historical media* can be argued to be a rather elastic one and include practically any media that disseminates a historical content.¹³⁶ For this reason, I chose to limit the study to include history textbooks and popular history magazines since I wanted to have a sample of historical media that was used in an educational context and that was produced both specifically for that context (i.e. history textbooks) and for a wider audience (i.e. popular history magazines). The assumption here was that a combination of these two historical media could be used to form a view of how history is presented both in school and in society, meaning that it could display aspects of historical culture both in a specifically educational context and also in society at large. Thus, these media were studied for the same purpose, even though they were intended for different audiences.

Although the historical media studied deal with different historical events (the textbooks have been studied from the perspective of the outbreak of the Cold War and the popular history magazines deal with why the First World War broke out), they deal with similar aspects of historical events. Both portray representations of the reasons underlying the eruption of military conflicts. However, one important difference between the history textbooks and popular history magazines is that they have differing origins. All the history textbooks studied were Swedish (and can thus be presumed to be related to the same national historical cultures), and the popular history magazines were from five different European countries (i.e. Poland, the UK, Germany, Spain and Sweden¹³⁷). Thus, these magazines cannot be used to shed light on a specifically Swedish historical culture. Instead they served the purpose of specifying and applying a framework of uses of history that was highly relevant to the other studies included in this thesis. Furthermore, the results from the study stress the importance of a critical awareness of the narrative and historiographical properties of historical narratives in an educa-

¹³⁶ See Thorp, *Historical Consciousness, Historical Media, and History Education*, 13.

¹³⁷ These articles were chosen through the international research project EHISTO directed by Professor Susanne Popp, see <http://www.european-crossroads.de/> for further information on the project and access to educational material¹⁴⁰ (including the articles included here).

tional context, thus aligning with the other studies included in this thesis. The second article included here presents the results from this study.¹³⁸

To find relevant textbooks for the studies I consulted the Swedish library database (libris.kb.se) and searched for 'history textbook' (in Swedish 'lärobok historia'). This search returned over 1 000 results, and in order to find matches relevant to this study, I included textbooks that were published after 1999 that were specifically intended to be used for history teaching at Swedish lower secondary schools (i.e. ages 13-15). This was to enable a broad study of contemporary lower secondary school history textbooks used in Swedish history education. This left me with 13 textbooks. These were:

- *Historieboken*¹³⁹
- *SO Direkt Historia Ämnesboken*¹⁴⁰
- *Historia kompakt*¹⁴¹
- *Historien pågår*¹⁴²
- *Historia: liv i förändring*¹⁴³
- *Levande historia*¹⁴⁴
- *Historia 3*¹⁴⁵
- *Historia: För grundskolans senare del*¹⁴⁶
- *Impuls historia 1-3*¹⁴⁷
- *Historia 9*¹⁴⁸
- *Prio Historia 9*¹⁴⁹
- *Historia utkik*¹⁵⁰

The sections of these textbooks that covered the historical development from the end of World War 2 in 1945 until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, were studied extensively both in terms of narrative content and use of images. This meant that sections on social aspects as well as foreign and domestic policies and developments that took place between 1945 and 1989 were in-

¹³⁸ Thorp, 'Popular History Magazines and History Education'.

¹³⁹ Bengt Almgren, *Historieboken: En lärobok för grundskolans senare del*, SO Direkt, 99-2308463-9 (Stockholm: Bonnier utbildning, 1999).

¹⁴⁰ Bengt Almgren et al., *SO Direkt Historia ämnesboken* (Stockholm: Sanoma Utbildning, 1999).

¹⁴¹ Hans Almgren, Stefan Wikén and Birgitta Almgren, *Historia kompakt*, 2nd ed. (Malmö: Gleerups, 1999). ¹⁴² Marika Hedén and Robert Sandberg, *Historien pågår* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1999).

¹⁴³ Karin Sjöbeck and Birgitta Melén, *Historia: Liv i förändring, del B* (Malmö: Interskol, 2002).

¹⁴⁴ Lars Hildingson and Kaj Hildingson, *Levande historia: Elevbok*, 1st ed., SOL 3000 (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2003).

¹⁴⁵ Bengt Almgren, *Historia. 3*, SO Direkt, 99-2308463-9 (Stockholm: Bonnier utbildning, 2005).

¹⁴⁶ Göran Körner and Lars Lagheim, *Historia: För grundskolans senare del. Grundbok, Puls* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2002).

¹⁴⁷ Göran Körner and Lars Lagheim, *Impuls Historia 1-3* (Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 2009).

¹⁴⁸ Mattias Tordai, *Historia 9*, 3rd ed., SOS-Serien (Stockholm: Liber, 2012).

¹⁴⁹ Bengt Almgren et al., *PRIO Historia 9* (Stockholm: Sanoma Utbildning, 2013), 9.

¹⁵⁰ Erik Nilsson, Hans Olofsson and Rolf Uppström, *Historia 7-9, Utkik* (Malmö: Gleerups, 2013).

cluded in the study. The section of the development of Sweden after 1945 in one of the textbooks¹⁵¹ was used for the study presented in the first article of this thesis.¹⁵² All of the textbooks except one¹⁵³ were used for the study presented in the third article of this thesis.¹⁵⁴

History Teachers

In order to analyse how teachers relate to historical culture, historical media and history, I chose to contact teachers that had experience of teaching the Cold War in Swedish lower secondary school that were born no later than 1970. This was to make sure that they would have reached late adolescence or adulthood by 1989 and hence have had a possibility to form their own memories and experiences of the period until 1989. I considered that ten teachers would be an appropriate number of teachers since that would allow me to interview them at greater length. It would also provide a large enough sample to presumably display some characteristics regarding how Swedish lower secondary school teachers approach historical media portraying certain aspects of the Cold War, as well as their experiences of the Cold War era. To find relevant teachers to include in the study, I began by contacting head teachers at schools in the central regions of Sweden. I presented the research project briefly to the head teachers and enquired whether there were teachers at their schools that fit the criteria for inclusion and that might be interested in participating in my study. I also asked permission from the head teachers to contact these teachers. When such permission had been granted in writing, I contacted the teachers and explained how I had acquired their contact details and the aims of my research project. Once I had received written consent to participate in the study from ten teachers, I ceased contacting further head teachers and schools. Of the teachers that agreed to participate, there were an equal number of male and female teachers. Three of the teachers were born in the 1950's, six were born in the 1960's, and one was born in 1970. Nine of the teachers worked in small to medium-sized Swedish towns and one teacher worked in a large Swedish city. The teachers came from varied social backgrounds, but most of the teachers, six of them, came from what could be called working class backgrounds. The majority of the teachers had worked in other professions and had studied to become teachers after the age of 30. Only one of the teachers interviewed had solely worked as a teacher for their entire professional career.

All teachers were interviewed about their interpretations of quotations relating to the Cold War. The quotations were ambivalent in character, i.e. the

¹⁵¹ Körner and Lagheim, *Historia*, 340–50.

¹⁵² Thorp, 'Historical Consciousness and Historical Media'.

¹⁵³ This textbook was not included for this study since it contained the exact same narrative of the Cold War period as in a textbook written by the same authors that was published at a later date (*Impuls Historia 1-3*). ¹⁵⁴ Thorp, 'Representation and Interpretation'.

meanings of the quotations were hard to determine and they could be read in a number of ways. During the interviews the teachers were shown four quotations that had been selected from German, Swedish and Swiss history textbooks that dealt with different aspects of the Cold War. The teachers were asked to read the quotations and then answer a number of questions that related to how they interpreted the meaning of the quotation, how it related to a public historical culture, and what their personal opinion of the quoted text was. All interviews were conducted at the teachers' respective schools at a time and place of their own choosing. All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed shortly afterwards. The assumption behind using the ambivalent quotation interview was that the teachers would have to make their implicit assumptions of the Cold War explicit in order to render the quotations meaningful and to deal with the ambivalences in them. The quotations would render longer answers from the teachers in which they would have to engage with the quotations to make sense of them. Furthermore, it was assumed that information could be gathered on how teachers engaged with textbook narratives from a cognitive perspective.

Nine of the teachers also participated in an autobiographical interview in which they were asked to relate their experiences of growing up during the Cold War era and how that may have influenced them as history teachers. The cue they were given was 'Tell me about your life from as far back as you can remember and how it has shaped you as a history teacher.' These interviews lasted between 60 to 90 minutes and, like the ambivalent quotation interviews, the interviews were conducted at the teachers' respective schools at a time and place of the teachers' choosing. These interviews were also audio-recorded and transcribed shortly afterwards. The assumption here was that the teachers' narratives of growing up during the Cold War era, and how that has affected them as history teachers, would shed light on how they perceived the Swedish educational historical culture concerning the Cold War and enable analyses of how they related to the Cold War at a more personal level. Since I did not want my data to be limited only to how teachers *talk* about their interpretations of narratives and experiences of the Cold War period, I chose to observe two of the participating teachers when they *taught* the Cold War unit in class. This enabled comparisons between how the teachers talked about the Cold War during interviews with me, and how they carried out their teaching. The teachers who agreed to be observed during the teaching of the Cold War were also interviewed a third time. This interview took place after the classroom observations and here I asked the teachers how they had experienced the teaching unit on the Cold War, what they had thought of when planning and preparing the teaching unit, and why they thought pupils should study the Cold War. These interviews were also conducted at the teachers' schools and they were also audio-recorded and transcribed.

For the first of the two articles focusing on teachers,¹⁵⁵ I used one of the quotations from the ambivalence interviews. The reason I chose this particular quotation was that it rendered long answers from all participating teachers and it dealt with a topic that is central in the narratives of the Cold War in the lower secondary school textbooks studied: the emergence of the Cold War conflict. This would make comparisons between the teachers' answers and the narratives in the textbooks easier. I chose to apply a methodology inspired by one previously applied by American researcher Sam Wineburg.¹⁵⁶ I asked the teachers to tell me what they were thinking as they read the quotation. My objective was to gain knowledge of how teachers situated in a dominant public historical culture (as portrayed in history textbooks) relate to aspects of that same historical culture. Therefore I deliberately presented them a narrative that contrasted with what is usually narrated in contemporary Swedish lower secondary school textbooks since it did not make a clear stand regarding who was to blame for the Cold War.

For the second of the studies concerning history teachers included in this thesis,¹⁵⁷ I used the autobiographical interviews of two teachers. These teachers were also observed during teaching and they were interviewed after the teaching unit. When analysing the teachers' autobiographical interviews, I chose to only include the sections of the interviews that specifically dealt with the Cold War, i.e. I omitted sections that dealt with general accounts of childhood experiences, schooling, popular culture, et cetera. This study was meant to complement the previous one in the sense that it did not only include the interviews with the teachers about how they interpreted textbook narratives, but instead tried to gain knowledge about the context in which educational and historical media is used. It aimed to find out how the teachers' narrated personal experiences of the Cold War related to the textbook narratives of the Cold War, and how the teachers enacted these narratives in teaching. Thus, this study was intended to provide a broad perspective on how the history teachers interpreted a textbook narrative.

Taken together this methodological approach enabled studies of how history is portrayed and historical culture constituted both regarding history textbooks and popular history magazines. Furthermore, through the interviews and classroom observations, a practice-oriented approach was enabled that allowed analyses of how historical media are interpreted and applied in an educational context.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Sam Wineburg, 'Reading Abraham Lincoln: An Expert/expert Study in the Interpretation of Historical Texts', *Cognitive Science* 22, no. 3 (July 1998): 319–46.

¹⁵⁷ Thorp, 'Experiencing, Using, and Teaching History'.

Application of Theoretical Framework and Coding of Empirical Data

A crucial aspect of empirical research is to specify how the theoretical tools of a study have been applied to analyse various phenomena. Since the studies included here apply the same theoretical framework and tools to different data, it is also important to specify how the theoretical framework has been adapted to appropriate the differing characteristics of these data. Furthermore, it is also important to specify what I have discerned to be instances of the theoretical categories I have applied in the empirical data, i.e. what characteristics of the empirical data constitute a certain theoretical category, and why do I hold that to be the case? Another issue that I encountered in my research was the need to modify or adapt the theoretical tools I had chosen to apply. A keen observer will notice that while the theoretical approach of all the studies included in this thesis is the same, I have modified the theoretical tools between the different studies. This means that the theoretical tools that I applied in the first article included here are not identical to the ones applied in the fourth article. This can be explained by differing perspectives between these studies, and also by the fact that I felt a need to modify and improve the theoretical approach of the earlier studies. While this could be argued to be a weakness of a study, I would instead argue that it shows that I have striven to critically engage with the chosen theoretical approach in order to make it more coherent, fitting and versatile.

The main theoretical tool that I have applied throughout the studies in this thesis is the concept of uses of history. As written above, I have chosen to apply two dimensions of the concept in order to capture both psychological and cognitive aspects of individuals' uses of history. In the first study included here I named these dimensions the *what* and *how* dimensions of uses of history. The idea was that Karlsson's typology of uses of history would correspond to what kind of use of history people make, and that Rösen's typology would correspond to how they apply that use. Later on I chose to change the names of these dimensions to *teleological* uses of history (corresponding to Karlsson's typology) and *narratological* uses of history (corresponding to Rösen's typology). The reason for this change was that the 'what' denomination was misleading since both dimensions answer to the question of *what* the use of history is, only from different perspectives. I found that the new names to the dimensions corresponded better to the basic characteristics of the two typologies.

Another matter that had to be addressed related to what the objects of study in the four studies were. In the first study I analysed textbook narratives, in the second study I analysed narratives in popular history magazines, in the third study I analysed textbook narratives and teachers' interpretations of a textbook quotation. Lastly, in the fourth study I analysed teachers' accounts of their experiences of growing up during the Cold War, their ob-